

# INTEGRITY

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Subject = Ownership

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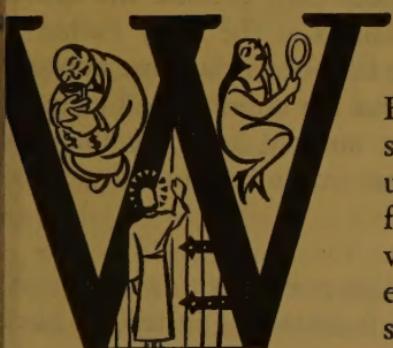
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## EDITORIAL



E HAVE called this issue "Ownership" to stress what (so it seems to us) many Catholics would prefer to forget today: that widespread private ownership of productive property is the only basis on which a sound economic system can be erected. The Popes have said so,

and the reasons are obvious. Men, being what they are, fallen creatures, they have to have an area of responsibility, autonomy, and creativity in order to exercise virtue, rear families and develop mature human beings. Some men, by their complete dedication to spiritual principles, can forego this economic prop. Such are the religious without a single personal possession, a minority in ways, but also an inspiration, ameliorating the predatory instincts of other men. Another group of men, at the other end of the scale, may also be without property. These are the less able amongst us, who because of limited intelligence or because they have forfeited property rights through sloth or irresponsibility, must spend their lives working for other men. So long as these men remain a small minority in a society where property holders create the legal and moral atmosphere, they are not much the worse for being employees and society benefits by their manning public projects.

A society characterized by small private holdings is a free society which cannot be subjected to tyranny, and in which men have at once the maximum of personal responsibility and the maximum number of opportunities for free cooperation. It is to, of necessity, predominantly an agrarian-craft society, although it may include some industrial enterprises, and of course many small shop-keepers and professional men. Since such a society is as remote as possible from what we have today, a centralized, mechanized, industrial capitalism, it is no wonder that men look for some less radical solution to our economic ills. Because the papacy sanctioned labor unions, men thought they would solve everything by organizing labor, but the papacy saw this organization of working men not as an end but as a *means* of obtaining, first, a living wage to ease inhuman living conditions, and then of allowing an increment which could be saved toward the end

of purchasing private productive property. But the organized labor movement was diverted to other ends because the spiritual life of the workmen was not intensified as the Holy Father has cautioned it should be. So now the factory workers are bourgeois. They have cars and television sets, but not children and farms and businesses of their own. They are notably less holy than were their fathers and grandfathers whose economic condition was much worse.

It is now proposed that we resign ourselves to a condition of universal proletarianism, only make it more so. Instead of having only a few owners, let us have none, only let us say that we are all owners. The workers who have not used unions to restore property now aspire to joint ownership of huge industrial enterprises, and it is thought (quite without reason) that this will make them better men, more responsible, more cooperative and even more godly. But whichever way you slice it, it looks like socialism and the death of liberty.

If it is terribly hard to restore property now we ought nevertheless not to despair of trying. Tomorrow it will be impossible. This issue, of property versus some compromise with propertylessness (which, in our view, may look like a compromise but really can only be a capitulation), is a key controversy among the laity and even among those in the apostolate. We propose to plunge into it wholeheartedly in defense of the property position and work with all others of like mind to develop a vigorous, positive program of action suited to the lateness of the hour. In this issue we are merely making a beginning. We would beg those who hold the opposing view, to whom we are bound in charity, to refrain from deprecatory remarks about back-to-the-land movements. Since land is the chief form of productive property, we hope many people will have the great good fortune to live again on their own productive acres, exchanging the ease of getting paid at the Automat for the real pleasure of working with their hands and backs, close to life and the good, rich earth, that their children may be as olive branches round their abundant tables.

THE EDITORS

# Distributism

## Some Misconceptions

By now most literate, English-speaking Catholics have heard distributism. Few as yet know what it is. Some are aware that it meets with contempt from capitalist and collectivist alike. They may even have heard that it has the audacity to attack them both. Many have an idea that it is some escapist back-to-the-land utopian, not to be taken seriously in this real and painful world. It was the faddists who started and developed this movement, however, two of the most lucid and penetrating minds of the twentieth century, and it receives its growing momentum from thousands of practical people scattered over the whole world. To know what distributism is we must first know how it began and why.

### Capitalism and Collectivism both Materialistic

Had it not been for the professional deformation of capitalist man—of man, that is, living in the capitalist age, whatever his economic or political position—we should all, long ago, have recognized that there is no fundamental disagreement between capitalism and collectivism. What we have mistaken for a conflict between principles is a conflict between interests only. Though there is opposition between the old-fashioned private capitalist and the new-fashioned state capitalist or collectivist, there is no basic difference in the principles which move them. For two centuries the basis of economic thought has been an act of faith in the reality of "economic man," and, as the excellent Infani says: "Once we have allowed this abstraction to put on a semblance of flesh and blood, we cannot but reduce life in general to economic life and history in general to economic history." The same fatalistic belief in an economic manikin, hatched around a (surprisingly uneconomic) universe by inexorable "natural" laws has bred the two rival systems which divide the world today and contend for its dominion. By their fruits we shall know them. Are we condemned to live (or die) of one or the other of these poisoned fruits? The new economists, the called neo-voluntarists, say "no" and say it emphatically, not as the scribes, but as persons having authority.

### The Human Will Is Free Again!

These new economists tell us that man can grow other crops than those which now possess his fields. They say that he is not obliged after all to choose between them, but that it is most properly the part of man to look about him and select better plants,

to cross and re-cross them; to care for, fertilize and water them until he achieves a sturdy hybrid fit to nourish and support him. They explain that the forces, natural and human, which at times prevent the complete accomplishment of man's economic purposes and which were thought of by the old economic naturalism as molding his entire life, rather constitute "resistances" round which he is free to pick his way. These obstacles modify the trajectory of his economic acts but do not give them their aim and impetus. The direction of such acts is imposed by the will alone which functions from the moment the aim is chosen and persists until the means have been selected. Thus the renovation of economic life is seen to be an effect of cultural rebirth and not, as has been too long taken for granted, as its cause.\*

Alongside this recent reorientation of economic theory which, as we have seen, the name "neo-voluntarist" has been given to, a practical movement—of which this article attempts to treat—called distributism has been for some years working out means to bring economic life into harmony with natural and religious law. Both the theoretic and practical branches stem from a single trunk: the doctrine of the Church. For, although Christ did not leave us blueprints for the kingdom of God on earth, He did leave us the Spirit of God, Who works in the spirits of men and particularly in the Church. The social encyclicals of the Popes are allowing for adaptation to time and place, the approximate expression of Christ's teaching in this domain.

### The Encyclicals Point the Way

One of the principal recommendations of the social encyclicals is that all men should own some property. For, in contradiction to Proudhon's saying that "property is theft," the Church insists that on the social plane *property is freedom*, or at least, the *essential basis of freedom*. (On the spiritual plane the reverse is true: property is oppression and poverty is freedom.) Following these indications, about fifty years ago two young men of good will and sharp wit set to work on the problem of social and economic justice. Chesterton and Belloc worked in England as Marx had done, observed the same phenomena as he, but the solution they evolved differs from the collectivist solution as day from night.

### Capitalist Weakness

Belloc began by pointing out that capitalism was doomed because of an internal weakness.\*\* It is, he warned us, by its very

\* Fanfani, Amintore, *Introduzione Allo Studio della Storia Economica*.

\*\* Belloc, Hilaire, *The Servile State*, Sheed & Ward.

ure unstable, for its criteria are in conflict with natural law. Modern industrial democratic capitalist society is yet more unstable cause of the internal contradiction which concentrates ownership of the means of production in the hands of a small minority of citizens and concedes political liberty to a large majority of citizens. Political liberty combined with economic impotence leads to its explosion. For man will not indefinitely, nor particularly in times of depression, give his political consent to his economic slavery. Thus capitalism finds itself obliged to evolve in order to survive; the principle of laissez faire gives way to paternalistic legislation, relief, pensions and social insurances of ever more corporative character.

### The Decay of Liberty

On the other hand the general instability, the oscillations between boom and bust wear the ordinary fellow down until he longs for security even at the price of freedom rather than be free to go hungry. The dropsical development of government and company bureaucracy which our time has witnessed, and much of enlistment in the armed forces, indicates a general shying away from the blessings of private enterprise. Long before the industrial phase of capitalism had developed, other decadent periods had seen similar swells of the bureaucracy and watched men flock to the standards for the sake of a sure job and regular pay. Indigence has often pressed men to barter their independence for the fleshpots of a protecting despotism and, although Christian civilization has reinforced man's natural horror of slavery, yet there is not a little danger, particularly in the present recession of Christian feeling, that we should lapse inertly into some new form of this once universally accepted condition. There is still, it goes without saying, a vast difference between the position of the wage-earner of a trust or in government employ in a capitalist state and that of a pittance-slave of a totalitarian state, for many aspects of the former's private lives are uninterfered with as yet. Nevertheless, there is a difference not so much of kind as of degree, and when the ponderous number of citizens in a state are in someone else's employ the tone they give the state will not be at all the same as it would be if they were independent property-owners. By a happy conjunction of political circumstances and natural resources the United States are not as yet, despite highly industrialized localities, a completely typical product of the Industrial Revolution. There still survives, from a very recently closed pioneering past, a vigorous tradition of independence and individual responsibility. But as Sumner Schlichter, the Harvard economist, pointed out. "The

United States is virtually a nation of employees, since three out of four persons who work for a living are on someone else's payroll. No mere tradition of independence is going to prevent a nation of employees—if that status is long enough continued—from reacting like a nation of employees in a future crisis. A man whose another's employ learns to watch his step rather than to step out on his own, while a man will stand his own ground if he owns his ground to stand on. If he has nothing of his own, though his salary be ten thousand dollars a year, he is not economically free; his judgment and his acts will almost certainly be colored by the necessity to keep on earning his wage. A high standard of living is not necessarily the product of a high wage. Since man does not live by bread alone, his standard of living must include many imponderables, and of these liberty is not the least. The Indian of Yucatan is freer eating tortillas and living on his own millet than the executive at fifty thousand dollars a year eating steak and living in terror of losing the job. What we must obtain is less than a high wage, which is very shortly left behind by high prices—but more than freedom from the necessity to run after wages. Thus alone can he maintain political freedom. It is not difficult to see that it is easier to organize the industrial worker, whose life at plant and local is organized for him, and to organize the white collar worker, whose life is obeying or passing on orders, into submissiveness to a collectivist regime than to organize the man who has always been his own master. In this as in all things the methods of capitalism are making straight the paths of collectivism and opening the door that it may enter in.

### **Collectivist Weakness and the Total Destruction of Liberty**

Collectivism is unstable as capitalism is, because its criteria are in conflict with natural law. Modern industrial collectivist society is supremely so and only achieves a semblance of stability by the merciless and unremitting use of force. It enjoys the stability of Columbus' egg; it stands only because the part that fails to support it is smashed. If communism appears to be strong, it is not because its collectivist principles correspond with the needs of men—which they do not—but only because violence and the fear of violence maintain it in power.

Thus our liberty is threatened from within and from without. Under capitalism it is dying, under collectivism it is already dead.

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\* *Time*, December 6, 1948.

## Distributist Strength and the Revival of Liberty

We know that liberty is a "good," both because natural reason periously tells us so and because the Church calls it "the first earthly goods." Let us then examine this solution, this distributism which asserts that it can, by displacing both capitalism and collectivism, salvage our liberty.

A naturally stable regime is one which corresponds with the tural needs of men. A naturally stable regime is the only gime which guarantees liberty since it alone requires a minimum force to maintain it.

Under capitalism the large majority is deprived of property. collectivism proposes to remedy this situation by depriving also e minority of property and resting all ownership in the state. Distributism proposes to remedy this situation by restoring prop- ty to all, or, at least, to a vast majority of men.

Capitalism has sharpened the conflict between poor men and ch men into the class-struggle. Collectivism proposes to end this y suppressing every class except the wage-workers. Distributism oposes to end it by fusing all men in the class of the owner-worker. "The starting point of distributism is the natural right man to own property and its aim is to ensure that every family us, not mark you, an equal amount of property (which would be anifestly absurd) but an adequate amount to subsist upon dependently."

### Insignificant Objections

If we are agreed that this end is good, let us see if it is tainable and, if so, how.

We need not waste time on the objection that it is utopian. fty years ago communism was called "impossibly utopian."

Nor need we take seriously the people who sigh that "one es not turn back the clock nor change the course of history." a clock has stopped we turn the hands till they show the right me. As for the course of history, it is like any other stream which not only changing its course infinitesimally all the time, but ever engineering and hard work can alter its direction altogether. or is distributism "romantic"—a reproach we sometimes hear, cept as all difficult enterprises are romantic.

### Farms or Factories

We hear too that it is "a back-to-the-land movement which nores the realities of the industrial age in which we live." istributism is a land movement because the foundational form property is land. But it is also a back-to-intelligent-industry ovement. For, although the capitalist spirit undoubtedly gave

the impetus to the Industrial Revolution, yet there is no reason why the discoveries of the latter should remain a monopoly of capitalism and collectivism. The crocodile is a dangerous creature but that is no reason to throw away his skin once you have killed him. Let us not replace superstitious reverence of machines with a superstitious horror of them, but use them simply as the tools they are. Some of the English Labor College group have attacked distributism because they took the simplistic ruralism of Father McNabb and Eric Gill with its sound but excessive machinophobia for the whole of the distributist program. In a later paragraph we shall explain the synthesis of agriculture and industry which we hope to work out.

### **The Obsolescence of Industrialism**

Although we accept an ordinary use of industrial technique in our scheme, that does not mean that we are partisans of industrialism, or even that we believe the industrial age has come to stay. We have been living in an industrial age but it is possible that it is not going to last much longer. As Dr. Witcutt points out,\* not only is the disruption of industry by atomic bombardment a future possibility, but the pioneer country of industrialism has already come out of the industrial age. England, that great exporter of industrial goods, had a favorable balance of trade of sixteen million pounds in 1913; in 1931, after thirteen years of peace, there was an unfavorable balance of one hundred and ten million pounds, and that is only a happy memory now that the deficit is counted in billions. Wars and the loss of colonies have accelerated this tendency but have not created it. The nations which lived by industrial production, the "nations of shopkeepers" find that they are becoming superfluous, not only because their customers are poorer, but because they have set up shop for themselves. Though the pangs of industrialism are being violently brought on, according to program, in the collectivist countries there are nearsighted people in the West who still hope, with advertising or machine guns, to open up new markets for industry among the as yet self-provident peoples of the earth. The time is not far off when there will be no markets left to conquer and industry will have to think of contracting instead of expanding.

### **Incompleteness of Distributism its Strength**

A further objection is that the distributist plan is not complete enough, that it does not cover every contingency. "The proprietary state (unlike the collective state) does not present an ideal solution . . . nor does it admit of mechanical perfection . . .

\* Witcutt, *The Dying Lands*, Distributist League, London, 1937.

ere could be no) better proof that the attempt is consonant with human nature. . . . Property, being a personal and human institution . . . will always be and must be diversified. It would suffice for the health of the state . . . if, at the end of the reforming process, so many families were found to be possessed of property in sufficient amount—to give their tone to the state."\*

## A Serious Objection

There are other objections to be answered. Belloc does so in detail in *The Restoration of Property*, a book which every citizen in a still free country should take the trouble to read before it is late.

The chief objection to distributism is the difficulty of bringing it about. It will, indeed, be extraordinarily hard to canalize economic life in such a way as to reconstitute small property. For while collectivism springs naturally from the soil of capitalism, distributism will have to reclaim and improve that soil before its seeds will grow in it. We shall at first have deliberately to reserve not only our laws but our state of mind, and to overcome not only the active opposition of interests and habits but a huge inertia as well.

## The Means for Restoring the Small Owner\*\*

Now let us examine the means proposed to overcome this difficulty.

In order to restore I. the small distributor, II. the craftsman, and III. the cultivator, it is proposed that there be:

### I. Three forms of differential taxation:

- A. Taxation against chain stores.
- B. Taxation against multiple stores.
- C. Taxation against large retail turnover.

A. The chain store is not only dangerous because it destroys the small distributor, but also because it controls, or very materially influences, wholesale distribution and production. The ownership of every added store, above the first one or two, would be discouraged by prohibitive taxation.

B. The multiple, or department store, which contains a number of different categories must be handicapped by taxation

\* Belloc, Hilaire, *The Restoration of Property*, Sheed & Ward.

\*\* The practical measures suggested in this and the two following sections are condensed from *The Restoration of Property*, which I have already quoted from in many instances. It is the fundamental exposition of the theory and application of distributism. If Chesterton, who more than any other writer has expressed the spirit of distributism (notably in his *Outline Of Sanity*) appears to have been neglected in this article it is because he does not lend to condensation.

which should begin after a few categories and become prohibitory before it deals with many.

It would be necessary to have a licensing system (such now exists in many countries before the sale of liquor is permitted to prevent illegal expansion. The license would be granted as matter of right to every applicant at a nominal cost, but this cost would rise very steeply as the number of licenses applied for by one man increased.

C. There would also be a tax on turnover lest the large distributor undersell and destroy the small distributor. The money raised by this differential taxation would be available in a kind of distributist reserve bank for the purpose of extending credit to the small man trying to get on his feet.

II. It will be even more difficult to restore the small craftsman; partly because he has forgotten his skills and partly because in many cases mass methods produce not somewhat cheaper but enormously cheaper than individual methods, and chiefly because the purchaser has lost the wish to buy what he wants because he has been taught by unscrupulous advertising to want to buy what he sees. Nevertheless, the re-creation of even a small number of craftsmen protected by charter would have a strong moral effect in bringing skill back into fashion. With the disappearance of advertising consequent on the less acute competition, a great deal of unnecessary buying would cease and purchasing power would become available for the fine and durable, although more expensive, products of the high-grade artisan.

### Regulation of Industry

It is proposed that we again apply differential taxation to prevent giantism in industry. For example, a factory owned by one hundred persons would be taxed, say, one hundred times less than a factory owned by one man. Again, shares owned by workers in a concern would be taxed less than those held by absentee shareholders. The need for such measures is obvious, not only to distributists but also to all people who know the impotence with regard to policy of the small shareholder in any large company. There is a series of well-thought-out proposals in a recent book by Fred I. Raymond, *The Limitist*, which show that giantism in industry and finance can be broken down in favor of small enterprises.

There are, of course, certain types of undertakings which from their very nature must be worked on a large scale. But we must not confuse with these legitimately large enterprises those which grow large simply because the elimination of competitive cost and even the greater perfection of methods accompanying

allegation, coupled with the greed of those who manage the amalgamation tend to produce them. The defenders of industrial capitalism and the defenders of communism have told us over and over again that amalgamation is "an economic necessity," because they think any method cheaper or more efficient must necessarily oust the less cheap and somewhat less efficient. They do imply that there is a "necessity" for the greedier and more unprincipled man to eat up the more generous and less instructed. There is no necessity for amalgamation in larger and larger units. There were no punishment for assault, you would necessarily find weaker men being bullied all over the place by stronger men. Change the rules and the "necessity" disappears.

### **A Mixed Regime**

Among the concerns which must be worked on a large scale are a few which so vitally concern society as a whole that they should be administered by society as a whole. Many of Europe's most conservative governments long ago found that communications worked more efficiently when run by the nation than by private enterprise. Others have found that coal and electricity fall under the same heading. There is no reason why a distributist should not admit of such measures. The originality of distributism is in not putting forward a doctrinaire solution for all situations. It is a flexible system, inflexible only in its defense of the rights of men, and it is prepared to combine suitable forms of socialization with suitable forms of cooperation as long as individual property is safeguarded. It is a modern version of the "mixed regime" put forward by Saint Thomas, which by its flexibility fits the body politic as no rigid system ever can.

### **Agriculture and Industry**

A further instance of a mixed regime is the suggested symbiosis of agriculture and industry. Communism plans to bring out the "combination of agricultural and industrial work" \* in order to proletarianize the farmer and thus fit him into the dictatorship of the proletariat. Distributism would reverse the process, to deproletarianize the factory worker by giving him the interests and responsibilities of the farmer to fit him for a free society. Men, however, could not (even if they wished to, which they don't) be full-time farmers. Not only because arable land might some future time be insufficient, but because society cannot, except in the most primitive stages, exist without the skills produced by a division of labor. Moreover, as we have said, it would

\* *Manifesto*, Sect. II, para. 9.

be foolish, since human ingenuity has invented machinery, not to put it to good use. It would be silly obviously to make by hand the mountains of preserving jars and tin cans our garden-owners are going to need, not to speak of the miles of antiseptic bandages and wire which a modern society requires. It would be manifestly impossible to make the motor cars and tractors, the threshers and binders, which our farmers are going to need, not to speak of precision instruments and other tools which men desire. The use of machinery should be abandoned wherever it degrades human production, that is in the making of those things which require taste and intelligence and variety. But let the mechanical tasks be done by machines. They can do them quicker and better than men who would find doing them by hand just as monotonous as turning a handle on the assembly line. Some work, even in Utopia, will always be dull. The remedy for this inevitable monotony is to make short work of it, not by scrapping it, which merely transfers the burden, but by making the work short. It is admitted by most assembly-line workers that the work becomes almost intolerable after from three to five hours, varying with the individual. The long hours imposed by our present economy are sheer torture to newcomers and not much better for the old "hands." This is one of the several reasons for the rising rate of insanity. There is no reason why the hours should be so long. Economic necessity must learn to obey human necessities. Have the neo-voluntarists not given new life to the proverb: "Where there's a will there's a way?"

### **The Owner-Worker**

Those factories which are necessary or useful should be in the country (a growing tendency even now, because of real estate prices) in order that each workman should be also a landed proprietor. He would own his house and at least enough land to grow vegetables and fruit for his family, to keep chickens and rabbits, a cow or a goat.

The number of employees in such a factory would, because of the greatly reduced hours, be at least double that presently employed, but the cost of the finished article would not increase since the worker who produced a substantial part of his own food will need a proportionately smaller amount of cash. The sense of security which the production of his own food gives a man and the interesting diversity of the labor put into it would counterbalance the monotony of the three or four hours in the factory. The freshness of the garden produce would so increase its food value as to constitute a further gain. It is to be assumed that the worker's family would all cooperate in running the farm, the

ildren would thus be busied in an interesting way and saved from the boredom which generates delinquency. The mother, giving more profitable work at home than in the factory, would stay with her family and keep it together.

The garden villages (very different from the company elements around our present rural factories) which would develop around the plants would cover too large an area if the factory itself were large. But since industrial giantism is already on the wane this should constitute no difficulty.\*

### Many Did Not See It Coming

The economic interpretation of history is false as a general explanation, because, as we know, the human will is the prime factor in the orientation of human acts. It is, however, clear that once a choice of means is made, the material results, like the material results of any other moral decision, remain with us and will and press us to their pattern. Marx, mistaking effects for causes, said, "The windmill gives us the society of the feudal lord, the steam engine gives us the society of the industrial capitalist." We may add that *electric power can give us the society of the owner-worker*. The steam engines around which industrial capitalism was built up were not only incredibly wasteful (losing eighty to ninety-five percent of the energy generated) but they required huge plants and uninterrupted working and had to be situated near railroads or coal mines. Electricity makes none of these demands, is perfectly adapted to drive machines used by one man, requires no preparation but can be switched on in a second, thus permitting work to be done in spare moments otherwise wasted, and it can be transmitted to the most undeveloped and inaccessible regions. This not only allows the owner-worker to allow a spare-time or winter-time trade\*\* but also encourages the centralization of the factories themselves allowing much part work to be done in the home. The resulting reduction in size of the greater number of factories would not only facilitate the combination of subsistence farming with some factory work, but could also solve the transportation problem. Statisticians have no doubt calculated the time and effort wasted in getting to and from work in our modern society. In these decentralized industrial groups no one would go to work more than, say, a mile from his home; the saving in time, in tires, and in temper would be in-

\* Opinion of Gina Lombroso Ferrero, a specialist in the matter, in "Machinism and Humanism," *Commonweal*, Jan. 17, 1947.

\*\* Before the war the shoe industry in France had to a great extent moved into homes, with an incomparable gain in quality.

calculable. For this type of small scattered industry truck transportation would offer the requisite flexibility. Here again would be room for individual ownership; since the drivers of the truck would be encouraged by the prohibitive taxation on large trucking concerns to own each his own truck. The railways had for century acted as centralizers when the internal combustion engine began, just after the first World War, to decentralize transportation. But the laws providing no protection for the small owner of a few buses or trucks, the big lines very soon destroyed them. This is another example of how a cumulative tax could have saved these small men. This is another case which proves that the spirit of enterprise only appears to be dead because everything conspires to kill it. Make its life safe and it will revive.

### **The Root of the Matter**

No condensation can ever present a fair picture of its subject. To give a true idea of anything so little schematic as distributism would need volumes. They have been written by the patriarchs of the movement and by a host of younger exponents. I hope that the reader, unsatisfied by what has been told here, will turn to them and be fired by their faith. For the beginning of any reform is, as Belloc says, "a seed sown in the breast."

We know that "it is bad philosophy, stemming from lack of religion" which has brought society to its present pass. We also know that a new social life can only come of a new spiritual life. Is it not, then, illogical to expect good results from the changes proposed by distributism which bear only on practical aspects of man's life? Is it not first necessary to return to sound philosophy, to true religion? Yet we further know that a general conversion of society is impossible without the leadership of great saints whom we so much need and so little deserve. These are the horns of a moral dilemma.

Although man has let poor philosophy darken his intellect, his natural lights have still, to some small extent, been spared. Many people who no longer understand words about God still have the instinct to defend their liberty. A faint chance remains that around this point they may draw together to safeguard their earthly life; there is just a hope that from there they may go on to seek more permanent salvation. Wherever God's law succeeds in replacing the law of the jungle or the law of the termites, even though conformity with it be neither conscious nor complex, it nonetheless brings nearer the kingdom of God. We are answerable, not consecutively but simultaneously, for attention to both the natural and the supernatural order. Social justice cannot wait.

on conversion any more than conversion upon social justice. To put off the establishment of God's law in society until we have established it in each man's heart is as much a sin as to put off the establishment of God's law in each man's heart until we have established it in the whole of society.

MARION MITCHELL STANCIOFF

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#### MODERN ECONOMICS

The farmer grows it,  
The truckman tows it  
The canner dices it,  
The merchant prices it  
The housewife buys it  
The husband fries it  
—That's supper!

# The Economics of the Christian Family

In the early spring of 1948 a national conference on family life was held in Washington. Depending upon each speaker's particular background and religious and social beliefs, there was much disagreement over the path that should be taken to strengthen the family as the key unit of society. With some exceptions, however, there was general agreement that things were not entirely well with the American family. The rising tide of juvenile delinquency furnished evidence hard to refute on this point. But at the conference, and later, many of the reforms suggested ran counter both to our democratic traditions and to the teachings of the Church regarding the role of the family in society.

Perhaps the most dangerous trend of our times in this respect is to emphasize remedies which, in fact if not in theory, hasten the disintegration of the family. There appears to be a general distrust of parents by the sociologists, psychologists, and social workers. For example, the United States Commissioner of Education at the end of the school term in 1948 suggested that the long summer vacation be abolished for school children on the theory that it was better to have the children under school supervision than under that of their parents. Organized play and after-school activities designed to keep idle hands busy, do withdraw the children from an additional segment of family life until the home becomes a combination dormitory and light-lunch establishment. Family activities appear to have little place in the planning of those professional planners concerned with the problems of modern youth.

I have no intention here of repeating once more the general Catholic stand regarding the family. As a one-time professor of history I can say that I know of no civilization that has long endured without a vigorous family life. One of the early marks of the disintegration of a civilization is the decay of family life, a decline in marriages, an increase in divorces, and a refusal to have children. Most Catholics give at least lip service to the Catholic ideal of the family although the decline in the Catholic birth rate as the Catholic family moves upward in the economic bracket leads one to suspect that in actual practice Catholics are often little better than their neighbors.

Without attempting to defend Catholics who give in to the ways of the world, I should like to discuss at some length the

onomic factors affecting the observance by Catholics of the Church's teaching regarding the family. For the sake of clarity because of the limitations of space I may have to oversimplify somewhat the problem and the solution. The reader, however, will have no trouble in filling in the qualifications and the elaborations which should go with the discussion.

We all know the purpose of Christian marriage. The matter discussed frequently from the pulpit and in the Catholic press. However, let us take a typical case and see just what happens to young Catholic couple attempting to carry out the teachings of the Church in a materialistic world ruled largely by the "iron laws" of economics. Before marriage, Joe and Mary had many discussions regarding the economic base of their marriage. Joe, being a young man, was not making a great deal of money. Perhaps Mary had a stenographer's job and it was decided that both would keep on working until the first baby arrived or until they had an apartment or a small home furnished. Being an average young couple they could not hope to buy their own place.

The first year of marriage was not too difficult. In view of the housing shortage they were quite happy in finding a one-room efficiency apartment. Their wedding presents and their combined incomes enabled them to furnish their small place rather nicely. Their first real economic problem came with the arrival of the baby. In spite of their combined incomes, they somehow had not been able to save up sufficient money to pay for the hospital and doctor bills. Joe had taken out hospital insurance but the baby arrived before he could use the insurance for the hospital bill. Then there were the many expenses he had not thought about, crib, diapers, a sudden surge in the laundry bill, periodic doctor bills for monthly checkups of the baby, bottles, a sterilizer, etc. After came prepared baby foods, a baby carriage, clothes, etc. And now the family was forced to live on a single salary. The one-room apartment became impossible. Besides, the landlord gave them an eviction notice because children were not allowed in his apartment house and the baby annoyed the neighbors. Then came the dreary search for a larger apartment in a building tolerating children. Because of the expenses caused by the baby it was necessary to get a larger place for a rental no higher and preferably lower than for the first place. Incredible though it seems, Joe and Mary did find such an apartment but in a shabbier section of town. They were unable to buy any additional furniture but at least they found a place for the baby's crib.

The cost of the second baby was not so high. Hospital in-

surance took care of most of the hospital bill although the hospital authorities found some thirty dollars that was not covered by insurance. Many of the things purchased for the first baby could be used for the second baby. They did have to buy another crib and their daily cost of living mounted as they took care of two babies. They sold the old car Joe had before his marriage and they found it more and more difficult to buy clothes for themselves. Because of the cost of the diaper service Mary now began to wash her own diapers.

Joe received a modest raise in pay the third year but this did not equal the rise in the cost of living index and took no account of his increasing family responsibilities. I won't go on and describe the later history of Joe and Mary. Inexorably, each additional baby meant for them a lowering of their standard of living, a further push toward the slum. As the children grew, there were shoes to buy, the food bill went up, clothes became an increasing expense. School proved to be an additional burden. Worst of all from the point of view of the parents their children were being raised in an unhealthy environment of city street and parking lots, whizzing autos, idle playmates, with temptations and false values on all sides. Except for the mysterious workings of God's providence which somehow enables families such as Joe and Mary's to survive, one does not see why their family should not eventually disintegrate into the hands of the welfare agencies as the economic burden becomes unsupportable.

In its advocacy of family allowances the Church has an answer for part of the problem presented above. However, the most generous family allowance yet voted by any government cannot begin to equal the actual cost of raising a child. The environmental factors mentioned above remain even with a family allowance. A recent survey indicated that of church members in the United States, the Baptists and the Catholics were the poorest. We know that we Catholics are concentrated particularly in the great Eastern cities. Monsignor Ligutti, O. E. Baker and others have drummed into us over and over again the undeniable fact that our great cities cannot reproduce themselves. This means that the Catholic Church in America, anchored in the big cities, is faced ultimately with a declining membership unless sufficient converts can be made to counteract the declining birth rate of the cities. Because of the factors noted above, we cannot assume that Catholic urban families will reverse the normal urban trend. The history of the Catholics in Quebec who have moved to the cities demonstrates this fact.

What then is to be done? Obviously, one of the first things to attempt to change the environment of the family to one more favorable for family health and well-being. Urbanism ultimately means death for the family. Each additional child means a lowering of the family's standard of living and the necessity of finding larger housing quarters.

Instead of starting off in a city apartment Mary and Joe could have purchased an acre or two of land in the country within commuting distance of Joe's job. In order to get a home for themselves they could have lived in even a pre-fabricated garage and done without modern improvements until they could pay for them out of the money they would otherwise have spent for rent. Perhaps their families on weekends could help them build at least a cinder-block or frame shell in which they could live while finishing it off. Or perhaps parish guilds or young men's organizations could in a weekend or two throw up a shell much in the spirit of the old house-raisings in colonial America. A garden, a couple of goats or a cow, and perhaps a pig or two and a few chickens would in the long run be more profitable to the family than Mary's job in the city and as the children arrived the extra food cost would not be so apparent. At a surprisingly early age, the children could begin to share in the responsibility of providing food for the family by taking care of some of the livestock.

In place of the crowded city environment the children would grow up in the open air, with plenty of play space. By choosing the cheaper land, well off a busy highway, money is saved and the children kept from an untimely death from a passing auto or truck. I know one man with a larger place who with the birth of every son plants a sufficient number of trees on his place to grow up into marketable lumber by the time his son is ready for college so that his expenses will be paid. With one more child eating eggs is no great burden to the family to add a hen or two to the laying flock.

With food and shelter taken care of, most of the battle is won. A home-built house can easily be expanded to take care of new little residents. In my own case, for example, now that our fifth baby has arrived, I am preparing to change the shed roof of part of our structure to a gable roof giving me space for a room upstairs. My oldest boy, five at the end of October, is the owner of a seven-month old milk goat and is already being trained in its care and management. Little Lois, a year younger, helps feed the chickens every day and even little Anton who is just three helps his mother bring in the laundry from the line.

When youngsters reach their teens in the city they are still heavy and, indeed, increasing burdens upon their families. In the country by that time they are already more than paying their own way through the aid given in developing the various home enterprises. Their work teaches them self-reliance, responsibility and resourcefulness. They learn there is no magical way to get the things they need and want without working for them.

I am restricting myself to a discussion of the economic basis of the family but the reader will easily realize that there are even more important considerations involved in the sort of family I am describing, the additional strength of a family in which each member takes some part in the family enterprise, the family planning involved in which the children are encouraged to take a part, the health that comes from outdoor living and exercise, the constant evidence of God's work when one labors with growing things, the skills that are acquired easily and naturally. Every one of my boys by the time he is seventeen will have a rough mastery of the carpenter's, mason's, plumber's and electrician's trades in addition to the ability to grow things in the soil. He will be able to build his own home with his own hands and in the precarious times ahead will have the versatile background necessary for survival. My girls will have similar training along lines complementing the activities of the boys.

In discussing the economics of the Christian family I have emphasized the problem of providing for additional babies. But the older folks too form part of a family and one of the many tragedies of our times is the inability of the average family to take over the support of aged parents who at times have impoverished themselves in order to give the children "a good start." The city apartment obviously was not designed for the care of one's parents or in-laws. Even if a large-enough apartment could be found and paid for, the nervous tension of so many people living so closely together is often too great. Here again, the rural home provides a solution. Additional quarters with extra privacy can be erected at nominal cost. The old man who always seems in the way in an apartment becomes largely self-sustaining with a garden and a few chickens of his own. He becomes the playmate and the arbiter of his grandchildren. He has new self-respect as he feels that he is pulling his own weight in the family's economy.

The family such as I have described first of all is in a position to follow the teaching of the Church in regard to the bearing of children; this in turn insures the continuance of the Church in America, the repopulation of our country at a time when our great cities cannot reproduce their citizens, and the training and up-

ing of the type of democratic citizen envisaged by Thomas Jefferson as the vital support of American democracy. In spite of the exceptional characters which some of our slums have produced, must be granted that the typical urban resident does not make an ideal citizen of a democracy.

For the reasons noted above, an increasing number of families, Catholic and non-Catholic, are deserting the cities for rural environments even when it is necessary in most cases to obtain a city job. Few families regret the move although it is absolutely necessary that both husband and wife agree upon the wisdom of making the change before taking the final step. It is helpful also if two or more families with similar ideas settle near enough to each other to permit the women to visit and compare notes. The isolated family can succeed only in the event the woman is remarkably self-sufficient and does not mind the loneliness of a rather secluded life. It is not my purpose in this article to discuss the spiritual and moral development that would be possible in a whole community of such families with its own school and church.

I do not wish to minimize the importance of the family-livelihood plan. In our present society some such plan is essential but the money would render more effective help to the large family if the family were in a rural environment where the subsidiary members of the family could produce real wealth at home. The production by the family of as many of its own needs as possible seems to be the only way in which a young couple can bear and rear children in a healthy environment, frugal no doubt, without any modern conveniences, but receiving the essentials of adequate and healthy shelter and good food.

I speak from personal experience. I have heard so many of my youngsters plead for the glass of milk their mother did not have or for the second helping at the table that could not be given. No matter how desperate our situation, so long as we have our land and our cow, my tiny tots have all the rich raw milk they can drink with none of the vitamins pasteurized out. When the cow goes dry next summer we expect our two milk goats to come into production. In the meantime, our cow provides also our butter and milk for the neighbor's children until their own goats come in fresh. My children are outdoors from dawn until dark. They have excellent appetites and go to sleep promptly in the evening after their prayers. Before we moved to the country they were pale and anemic, dawdled over their food and refused to go to sleep without repeated spankings. They copy my efforts in

the garden with dime store tools I bought for them. They attempt to help me in my building operations and next year I shall buy the oldest some simple carpenter tools. They pick wild berries in season, watch the chickens or play with the goats and the cats. In the evening they will be waiting to meet me, perhaps part way down the gravel road to my place so that they can ride a short distance with me, all talking at once, reciting the day's events and trying to enlist my help in any number of their private enterprises. We have our winter's potatoes from our garden, a laying flock of chickens that supplies us with fresh eggs and enough of a surplus to pay for the feed and we have made a start at least on growing our own feed. The size of our family means that there are always hand-me-down clothes for the younger ones to wear. Surplus bunk beds from the army solve the sleeping problem. Next year I shall plant a little more food to take care of little Eric who arrived last summer. Attractively-printed feed sacks make clothes for the younger children. I have not yet licked the shoe problem, a very real one with baby shoes at five dollars a pair, but if things got desperate I would insist on reverting to my boyhood in northern Alaska and make Eskimo-type footgear out of the skins of our own animals.

There are so many other advantages to this way of living that I find it difficult to restrict myself to a discussion solely of its economies. There are so many intangible psychological factors involved, the element of stability, the feeling of security which children have when living in a house of their own surrounded by land that they can never get in a city apartment. Most Europeans look upon America as a matriarchal society since the man seems to exists merely to bring home a salary check. What training the children get outside of school comes primarily from the mother. In the above plan of living, in the evening and on weekends the father is in intimate contact with his children and can assume some of the responsibility for their training. They help in simple tasks, run errands, get a tool I lack for a particular job, and so forth. Even in heavy tasks where my full strength just barely succeeds in balancing some heavy object the extra push of my two small boys creates the necessary margin for success. Nicky watches me milk the cow every evening and when his hands are a little larger that is a chore he will take over. There is also a wonderful feeling about being one's own master in the country. My children can make as much noise as they wish. If I want to keep a pig or two I need ask no man's consent. I have my own water supply, I could get my own fuel from my woods. There are fish, crabs

d oysters just off my property and the only reason I have not  
joyed them so far is that I have spent my spare time in building  
and cultivating. In two or three years the boys will enjoy fishing  
and crabbing and will be able to satisfy their mother's love of  
a food.

As I have mentioned above, God's providence is the only  
planation we can give for the success of so many large families  
lived under incredible difficulties in urban slums. But we should  
take advantage of the natural means God has given us in order  
to make easier the raising of a Christian family. We can increase  
sanctity by resisting our daily temptations. At the same time  
we are taught now to expose ourselves wilfully to occasions of  
sin. For many people the city is just such an occasion of sin. The  
economic pressure alone leads to birth control if not to outright  
adultery and embezzlement. The problem is critical for the Church  
in America and it will be necessary to multiply the efforts of the  
National Catholic Rural Life Conference many times if we are to  
ensure a stable and vigorous Catholic population in the next  
century or, dare I say, in the next depression when the abject  
dependence of the urban population will at once become apparent.

WALTER JOHN MARX



### MANHATTAN MADNESS

Small wonder why so many choose  
The river for a tomb.  
In all this vast metropolis  
It's the only place there's room.

# VAN GLITTERBUCKS

"All ye who enter here  
• OWNING YOUR OWN HOME  
• HAVING A HOME  
• HAVING M

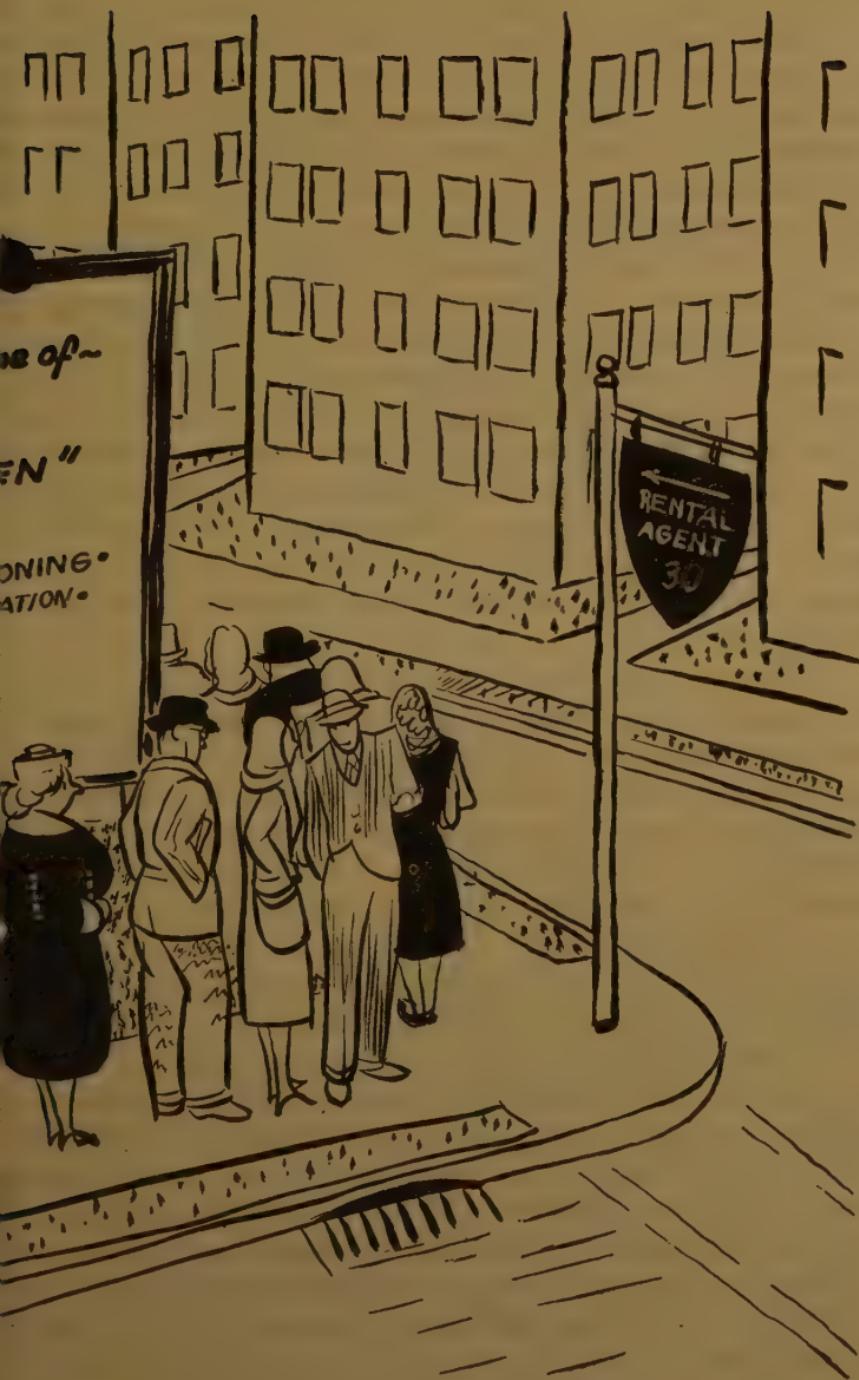
IN PLACE OF THESE, ENJOY

• JANITOR SERVICE • REFRIGERATOR  
• TILE BATHROOMS • ELECTRIC KITCHEN

## WELCOME, IF YOU CAN

AND  
CONSIDER YOURSELF  
PROVIDENCE





## The Better Life

Men of heroic character can live a Christian life under any social conditions. Consequently there has been no age so dark as to lack its saints. But there is no doubt that some environments are better than others for the development of sanctity, and that the Church is concerned with bringing about an environmental situation in which unheroic ordinary people are helped rather than hindered in their attempt to live holily. Otherwise an encyclical on the reconstruction of the social order would be beside the point.

In a social order in which injustice abounds and in which many persons are the victims of exploitation, two tasks face the Christian community. The most obvious thing to be done is to take up the cause of the victims of society — to bind up the broken, to curb the power of the oppressor, to live with the down-trodden and to take Christ to them. In this task there is opportunity for the greatest devotion and self-sacrifice, and for the calling forth of the heroic element in man. But this is not the only thing to be done. The Christian community must also take thought in the matter of creating a social order which is more in keeping with the Christian ideal.

Human persons being limited in their abilities, it is to be expected that some Christians will concentrate their attention on one of these tasks, some on the other; and since we most of us see rather narrowly, it is unfortunately true that we are somewhat inclined to disparage the task that does not occupy our interest. Those who throw themselves heroically into the work of caring for the victims of society are frequently impatient with men who withdraw from the sight of distress in order to plan a better environment; and these in turn are likely to question the wisdom of devoting one's life solely to first aid rather than to cures.

Therefore, in discussing the values to be found in rural living and a certain withdrawal from industrial society, I would in no way wish to belittle the great glory of those who identify themselves with that society in order to save its victims. I am simply occupied with another task, one which I believe to be equally important if not as obviously urgent. When a person is responsible for a family, indeed, the urgency is the other way, and the seeking of the best possible living conditions becomes the obvious primary responsibility.

We must make a distinction between rural living and farming, for there is much farming which is almost entirely without those values that we will discuss. A ten-thousand-acre wheat farm,

instance, owned by a corporation whose members live in Chicago, run by an expert manager who is there only in season, having its work done by transient labor—such an institution is merely an outdoor factory and carries with it the evils of the factory system unrelieved by legislation.

We can exclude also the country homes of the wealthy, where there does not differ too much from the Park Avenue apartment except that there are more trees around, and one can play tennis or go riding without the fatigue of a journey away from home.

For our purposes, rural living means life centered in a country place where at least some of the processes traditionally associated with agriculture are carried out. It may be a family farm, or it may be a part-time farm or a "homestead." In any case it will be the center of other activities besides the eating, sleeping, and entertaining which are the chief occupations carried on in the city apartment.

What are the opportunities in this type of living which make us believe, the best environment for people to live in? Since the values directly associated with the family are being treated elsewhere, we will deal with the spiritual values offered by rural living in the spheres of work, association, appreciation, and responsibility.

One of the most dismal things about the truly urban man is that he does not understand work, for he has not experienced it. Of course he knows physical exhaustion and mental drudgery; he has nervous breakdowns and high blood pressure, and he dies of coronary thrombosis—but all these things happen to him not because he works but because he does not work. This requires explanation.

For real work to be done several elements must necessarily be present: (1) the mind conceives something to be done; (2) the hand, aided by tools, carries out the conception through the manipulation of certain (3) raw materials. The result is (4) a new creation, either something made, or some change brought about in the physical situation. When a man presides in this whole process—when his mind and hand work together, using his tools and his materials, to produce something which, when it is produced, is his, then he is really working. And this work is one of the greatest things man can do, both in the way of education and of satisfaction, for in it he is realizing a part of his likeness to God. Man is not only *homo sapiens*; he is also *homo faber*, man the maker. It is his nature to work. When he cannot work he is restless and discontented.

In our modern world, with craftsmen almost extinct and artists an infinitesimal and professional minority, the rural home supplies almost the only setting in which a person can work. Elsewhere the planner does not carry out his plans and therefore performs only part of what he is fitted to do. The man who toils does so by carrying out the plans made by someone else, and he also performs only a mutilated function. Neither of them possesses the thing made as a result of the planning and the toil. That belongs to someone who has done nothing but furnish the money. Thus all the people concerned with the production of things are acquainted merely with isolated aspects of the work process. They are not doing what by nature they are designed to do. And as consequence their labor is a chore, an unpleasant necessity which they indulge in as little as possible. They become abnormally interested in recreation and live for the weekend and the vacation.

There is indeed a kind of parody on work carried out by the men at the top of our economic system. They make plans and carry them out, and have the satisfaction which this brings with it. But such activity is not a coordinated effort of mind and body—these men still have to play golf to keep themselves from obesity—and thus does not have the full value of work. Moreover, it has a great disvalue in the field of morality, for the captains of finance and industry use men as tools and raw materials of their planning; and thus they commit the fundamental immorality of treating human beings as means rather than as ends. This misuse of men carries with it its own punishment, for it brings about in the one who does the misusing a ruthlessness that is the principal ingredient in the corruption which accompanies power.

The opportunity for real, soul-satisfying work, so rare in our day, is found abundantly in rural living. Here a man can make long-range plans and can carry them out without exploiting his fellow men; for the things that he uses are things that exist to be used: soil, plants, animals, building materials, etc. He can live a whole life of work without once using another man as a mere means for carrying out his plans. And neither does he become a tool of someone else. With the materials at hand he can employ the splendid coordination of mind and hand to create something of value for his family. He can fulfill his nature in real work. And this work is much more joyful than any mere recreation. As a matter of fact this work carries with it its own recreation, so that the man who works does not have to worry about how he is going to have his good times. The work itself is a good time even though it be hard. There is a joy in toil which the football player knows not. It is a quiet joy that comes from the knowledge that one has

mplished something, something of real value, and that the  
mplishment is his own.

Around me live several men who are "homesteaders." They  
k in town or in school and live in the country. They spend  
g hours in the evening working on their land. Their com-  
panions on the job or at school go to the movies or play poker  
the evenings, but these men work at home. Their companions  
nd money; they save it. And when you talk with these men  
come to realize that their interest, their real life, is in what  
y do at home. On the job they are carrying out someone else's  
ns. That is drudgery. But at home they are their own masters.  
ey are exercising that autonomy which is necessary to human  
nity. These few hours of autonomy constitute for them their  
life. Their rural homes give them their one chance to  
human.

Rural living also gives to many people their one opportunity  
true association. In our prevailing mode of earning a living  
n either order others around or are themselves ordered around.  
ey command or obey. It is only in their recreation, where  
hing serious is attempted, that they meet as equals and make  
isions cooperatively. Elsewhere most of their decisions are  
de for them by men they never see through channels that they  
not understand. They do not have the fruitful and dignify-  
ng experience of meeting as equals in voluntary association  
make decisions on matters of consequence.

In rural living there is perhaps not so much association as  
re ought to be, but what there is, is of a kind which is valuable.  
hen men meet together *impromptu* to carry out some task that  
ds to be done there are no commanders and obeyers. They  
et as equals, each can give his suggestion from time to time as  
work goes on, and the group decides at each stage what ought  
be done, all without any formal leadership. The work is ac-  
mplished efficiently without anyone being forced simply to obey  
to accept a subordinate position in the eyes of his companions.  
hen neighbors meet together to butcher a pig you have an  
ample of this kind of association. As the process goes on there  
a good many things that have to be done simultaneously. You  
d the men doing these various things not by any prearrangement  
blueprint, but as it were spontaneously, each person reacting  
what he sees that he can best do from moment to moment. And  
pig gets butchered and someone has some valuable meat.

Along with this useful activity there has gone a lot of story-  
ing, joking, and banter that makes the whole undertaking a

recreational as well as a food producing enterprise. It has been hard work, but it has been fun too. Each man who takes part has maintained his dignity as a human person, but the group has worked together to accomplish something that one man alone could not have done. When a person goes to the country to live he is surprised at the number of necessary tasks that are carried out in just the way which combines toil, planning, cooperation, recreation, and social life with the production of something of material value. Many times people of both sexes and all ages are included in the common enterprise, which then becomes also an educational project. There is a heart-warming, satisfying value in this association which neither the factory nor the cocktail party can approach. It is the kind of activity that produces strong families and strong neighborhood communities.

No society can long endure unless the people who compose it have some conception of responsibility. That is, they must be aware that their actions, good and bad, wise and foolish, have consequences which bring well-being or disaster as the case may be; and they must accept the obligation of performing those actions which bring well-being and avoiding those that lead to disaster. In the very complicated, industrialized, interdependent world in which we live it is not easy to trace the lines of cause and effect. The results of one's actions on one's self and on society are by no means immediately discernible. Rewards and punishments are so slow in catching up that we may escape them altogether, and will seem that what we do has little significance one way or the other. Since our actions have little visible effect we grow lax in our sense of obligation to do the good and avoid the evil. When we cease to worry about effects, we become essentially irresponsible. Our own pleasure then becomes the only measure by which we evaluate what we do. We have only to look around us to see this degenerative process at work.

In rural living the consequences of your actions come home to roost. If you do a foolish thing, you suffer. If you procrastinate you do without something you would like to have. If you are negligent, a project fails. And there will be no doubt as to where the blame lies. The trail from effect to cause leads right back to the guilty one. When I allow a calf to be out in the cold rain and he dies of white scours and we have no veal for the winter, I cannot put the blame on labor or the Republicans or the communists. The finger points at me. I will not do it again. And when my boy leaves a gate open and a goat gets out and eats up his little apple tree, he cannot blame fate or the government for

loss of the tree. There is no better school than rural life for young people realize that they must watch their actions if they want to avoid loss. It is a harsh school, but one learns in it.

One learns both immediate and long range consequences. When you leave the gate open so that the goat eats the tree, the whole damage is done in a matter of a couple of minutes; but the loss of apples will be felt years from now. If I neglect to put in alfalfa this spring I will be without hay next year. By my carelessness I lose a year. Most of the processes of agriculture are connected with at least an annual cycle, so that what I do now has its results a year from now, and the results that I want next year must be planned for now. In such a life one cannot live simply in the present. The past and the future are so intimately bound with the *now* that in all one's planning a sweep of time must be considered. This is quite different from living from pay day to pay day, and far more valuable as an exercise in responsibility. It inculcates the habit of far-seeing, and this is necessary for the citizens of any healthy society.

One of the great values of rural living is the worthy standard of appreciation that tends to accompany it. In urban living the accepted opinion concerning what is desirable and what not is one that works for the demoralization of man. Exposed his whole life time to the bombardment of advertising propaganda, and finding little satisfaction in the occupation that earns him his bread and butter, the city man can only with difficulty avoid assuming that the twin goals of life are comfort and entertainment. As a countryman, I am literally astounded at the way these two things seem large in the minds of my city friends—good Catholic friends. The serious consideration they give to the show and to the meeting place, the talking they do about it and the glow of anticipation they reveal when looking forward to how they will spend the evening, and the reminiscing afterward, their pride in the "nice things," meaning push-button appliances and tiled bathrooms—this makes me wonder which of us is crazy, they or I. And the absorbing interest that is centered on the gladiatorial combats in the football stadium! And the constant flow of alcohol inducing the rising volume of hectic laughter at the cocktail party! The whole business is an indication of a mass of false values leading to a counterfeit joy. And then there is the false value that is more serious—the measure of success by the extent to which one can dominate other men.

There is a glitter to these fake goods that is attractive everywhere. It pulls people to them out of all ways of life, including

the rural way. But the rural life seems to be about the only environment in which a person can put up a successful fight against these false values by putting into practice some alternatives. Here, because of so many opportunities of comradeship through common enterprise, one can learn to appreciate the quiet joy of family life and the association of neighbors. Here one can learn that the joy of creative work far exceeds that pleasure that comes from watching twenty-two men roll in the mud. Here one realizes that the acceptance of responsibility brings a far higher satisfaction than does irresponsible play. Here also necessity requires that accomplishment be rated higher than conspicuous consumption and a compulsory doing without many things can open the gates to a real understanding of the values in an ascetic way of life.

There is no denying that these values which one can learn to appreciate in rural living are more normal to man and more healthy for society than are those which the urban life encourages and that therefore the rural home supplies a better environment in this respect than does the home in the city.

From the standpoint of both individual and social well-being, therefore, the idea of reconstructing the social order by bringing people into closer contact with the soil is not the absurdity that our socialistically-minded reformers would have us believe. Neither is it so impossible of realization as one might think, but that is another story.

The *forward to the land* movement can take its place as one of the intellectually respectable plans of reform. In itself it is not specifically Christian. It supplies a basis for a healthy natural society upon which a Christian culture can be founded, but it will not of itself supply that culture. It does, however, set forth a kind of association, a way of doing things, and a scale of values which are compatible rather than antagonistic to Christianity. That is more than can be said of urban society.

Willis D. Nutting



## VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

A job may make you fat  
A job may make you thinner.  
The thing that counts is what it does  
To make you saint or sinner.

## Our Daily Bread

The first principle of democracy is this: that the things common to all men are more important than the things peculiar to any men. . . . The democratic contention is that government (helping to run the tribe) is a thing like falling in love, and a thing like dropping into poetry. . . . It is, on the contrary, a thing analogous to writing one's own love letters or blowing one's own nose. These things we want a man to do for himself even if he does them badly. . . . In short, the democratic faith is that the most terribly important things must be left to ordinary men themselves, — the mating of the sexes, the rearing of the young, the laws of the state.\*

And the baking of the bread! Bread-making, though on a lower scale of values, is a perfect type of those things which must be left to ordinary men themselves—to amateurs. For the strange paradox is this: while we would want a family to bake its own bread even if it does so badly, the fact is that having each family bake its own bread is the one solid guarantee of its being baked well. This is only one more proof that the good human life is a consistent whole, that when we have established that life in its fundamentals, everything else falls into place. It is characteristic of a superficial reform of life that it solves one special problem, and may even create new problems in other departments of life. But it is characteristic of a radical reform, one which is in accord with man's nature and his supernatural destiny, that it should solve a whole host of problems, often in the most unexpected ways.

It turns out to be the case, then, that a free human life and a healthy, vigorous human life are two aspects of the same thing. There is a real, essential connection between the two, because both go back to a fundamental reality in human psychology.

It is too obvious to need stressing here that a free human life implies each family's ability to supply its own immediate wants (of which water and bread are the chief) by its own efforts. The history of non-domestic bread-making is the history of tyranny and oppression using the staff of life as a scepter of power. There is no need to labor here the point which any decentralist can prove: that the essential functions of life, the mating of the sexes, the rearing of the young, the laws of the state, the baking of the bread, must be left in the hands of amateurs. The decentralist

\* Chesterton, G.K., *Orthodoxy*.

st is even inclined to say, with an air of resignation, that this  
t be so even if the amateur does them badly. What I want  
naintain is that only the amateur will do them well.

I use bread-making as a typical example. The rearing of  
young would serve equally well as an example of the principle,  
cept that other people have already used it. What I want to  
w by the example of bread-making is this: that the essential  
ctions of life will be done well only when they are done by  
se who love, that is, by amateurs, and that will never be done  
sistently well by those who only profess knowledge, that is,  
professionals. The non-essential functions of life can be left  
professionals because we do not have to take what they give  
of non-essentials, we can make them meet our standards. But  
en we have once let the essentials out of our own hands, so  
t we become totally dependent on others for the things we  
not do without, then we must take what they give us. They  
make us accept their standards. And those standards will  
different, because they will be set by the end of trade, rather  
n by the end of use.

When I use the term *amateur*, I use it to mean not only one  
o loves the making of a thing, but more especially to mean  
e who loves the person for whom the thing is made. But I  
nt the term to mean both things in their proper proportions,  
e the two aspects of that love can be at odds with one another.  
e father grinding wheat for his family, the mother baking it  
o bread for them, are moved to action by love for those persons  
ose health and strength it serves. Still, if their attention is  
usssed entirely on the persons served by that bread, without an  
derstanding of the purpose of bread in itself, then they may  
rk merely to please the eye or palate or social pride of those  
y love. In so doing, they may unconsciously distort the art of  
ad-making to that end, producing what does not nourish. There  
i have love without knowledge.

But the very same end result can come from knowledge  
without love. The miller or baker can become completely  
orbed in his art, thinking only of how to make his product  
th more efficiency, with nicer appearance, with better ability  
ship and store. Even when he knows the effect of his new  
oduct on the health of the human person, he can become quite  
livious to those human persons whose life should be nourished  
that bread, who should find in that bread a source of strength  
the work which God has given them to do. There you have  
owledge without love.

The tragic history of bread-making, and of human health in the last century and a half, owes its origin to the collusion between two forces: knowledge without love on the part of the producer, love without knowledge on the part of the consumer. We have had millers and bakers working with great ingenuity for their own end, the perfection of bread as an article of trade. And we have had mothers of families, placing upon their tables, with great love, a product fit only for trade and not for human consumption, but still a product which they had been led to believe was better for their families than anything they could make themselves.

"The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." While acting for the wrong ends, the milling industry brought to those ends tremendous ingenuity and prudence. It started with a material, whole wheat flour, which had, for many centuries, been a staff of life to large segments of the human family. Despite its obvious adaptation to the needs of human health, whole wheat flour was far from being well adapted to serve the ends of trade. In the first place, it took much power to grind all the hard parts of wheat to usable size. But more importantly, whole wheat flour did not keep well. It was too readily attacked by the lower forms of life, which clearly found it as attractive and healthful as did man. It contained also, certain oils, whose importance was unknown at the time, which tended to become rancid.

From the commercial baker's viewpoint, there were further disadvantages. Whole wheat contained enzymes whose action on the gluten of bread made baking very unpredictable, so that the texture and size of loaves could rarely be duplicated. A mother who made his living at bread-making had to worry about such things, even if the mother of a family could take them in stride and even enjoy the continual variation in her product. Besides, the baker wanted something that would appear different from home-baked bread, so that he could call his product superior, whether it was or not, and cater to that human pride which might make bought bread a symbol of affluence.

For the family that baked its own bread, grinding the flour fresh as needed, these disadvantages of whole wheat flour were unimportant. Neither the ordinary people nor the millers and bakers realized in 1800 that the apparent disadvantages of whole wheat flour were really the source of its nutritional advantages. We now realize that its inability to keep, its palatability to insects, its possession of heat-unstable elements like enzymes, were pro-

the presence of something vital to human nutrition. But the rationalizers of milling and baking did not know this. They were bent on improving their art. Given the end of their—to convert wheat into an item of trade—they succeeded so significantly that they were able to undermine the health not of their fellow-countrymen, but of people all over the globe.

In the beginning of the last century, the silk-bolting of flour was a light-colored product which the miller or baker could offer as proof of the superiority of the professional product. In those days, change was synonymous with progress. The partial removal of bran and wheat germ by this process meant a partial loss of most important vitamins, minerals, and high-grade proteins. This was only a beginning. The use of an air current to separate flour and bran, a development which followed the Civil War, meant further impoverishment of the wheat. Worse still, it was demonstrated that the closer flour could be made to approximate the starch, the longer it would keep, and the better it would be.

The really revolutionary invention, however, was that of the roller mill. From being a product tediously ground and separated, flour could now be simply popped out from within its covering of bran and wheat-germ, leaving these latter two essentials for the lucky livestock and producing a light-colored product in one single operation. The result of this invention is well-described by James Rorty and N. Philip Norman, M.D., in the book *Tomorrow's Food*:

Because of its tremendous speed and output, the steam-powered roller mill was precisely the invention needed to complete the centralization of the American milling industry. And because of the serious devitalization and impoverishment of the flour it produced, it played a major part in piling up the dietary deficiencies with which the nutritionists of World War II were obliged to deal.

The average roller mill flour represented an extraction from the wheat berry of from 60 to 70 per cent of its original content, the remaining "offs" being used chiefly for stock feed. Nutritionally, it was inferior to whole wheat flour not on one but on many counts. The value of its protein content was much reduced, being low in the amino acids, lysine and tryptophane, which are essential to growth. The difference was just this—in 1840, one ounce of genuine unspoiled whole

wheat bread made of whole stone-ground wheat meal (not flour) contained thirty units of Vitamin B<sup>1</sup>. One hundred years later one ounce of white bread contained not thirty, but FIVE units of Vitamin B<sup>1</sup>. Seven hundred units of Vitamin B<sup>1</sup> per day are considered necessary for the maintenance of good health. The daily consumption of whole wheat bread in 1840 assured 1,200 units of natural Vitamin B<sup>1</sup>—while our average daily intake today assures only 200 units, mostly synthetic.

With respect to minerals, the refined product of the roller mill contained on the average a fourth as much iron, calcium, phosphorous, potassium, copper and manganese as whole wheat flour.

But it was by its all but complete elimination of essential vitamins that the roller mill dealt its most devastating blow at the American diet. Whereas the silk-bolted flour against which Graham and his medical allies had inveighed contained 60 per cent of the thiamin present in the wheat berry, the "straight run" product of the roller mill contained only 16 per cent and the dead white patent flour as little as 6 per cent. Similar though varying losses occurred with respect to riboflavin, nicotine acid, pyridoxine, biotin, and presumably other as yet undetermined members of the Vitamin B complex present in the outer coatings of the wheat.

During this time, whiteness had been made synonymous with goodness, through a cleverly-planned program of advertising aimed at the destruction of home milling and baking. Actually white flour was good only from the point of view of the trade—it kept well because it could not support the life of insects which had multiplied in whole wheat flour; it baked well because it was almost pure starch and gluten, a highly reproducible product. It is fairly easy to understand how the housewife could have become convinced that what was good for the trades was good for the family's health. Nutritional education on a popular level was practically non-existent. What is amazing is the way in which public health authorities, nutritionists of high standing who had consistently pointed out in no uncertain terms the nutritional deficiencies of white bread, and its deleterious effect on human health, should have suddenly retreated into a barbed-wire entanglement of weasel words when asked to commi

nselves against white flour for the sake of government action  
ng the two world wars. In 1916, for example, the U. S.  
lic Health Service issued a bulletin on the effects of milled  
at upon experimental animals. In the experiments reported,  
led-wheat diets killed the animals in several months, whereas  
y could thrive indefinitely on whole wheat. After protests  
n the milling industry, the Public Health Service issued a  
recting" bulletin to the effect that white bread was a whole-  
e food if balanced by an adequate consumption of high  
min and mineral foods. Yet they knew, as they said it, that  
y the rich could supply by other and fancier foods for the  
mins and minerals which nature provided cheaply in whole  
eat, and which had been removed by the milling industry  
ely for its own convenience. Such combinations of bold  
uds and weak retractions have been typical of government  
iles in the last three decades, as the book quoted above shows  
highly illuminating examples.

The whole history of the "enrichment" program shows the  
e abject subservience of government nutritionists to the  
ssure of big industry. The completely ridiculous idea of taking  
the best parts of the wheat berry, and then adding a few of  
m back in synthetic form, was only a stall of the milling  
ustry to keep from being forced into the production of a decent  
ole wheat flour during the time when food fought for freedom.  
hen such a program is called "enrichment," it is as if a thug  
uld hold you up, take twenty dollars from your purse, and  
n hand you back a dollar of his own, saying, "Congratulations,  
m, you're enriched." *Nutrition Reviews* remarked:

It is a curious fact that the enrichment of white  
flour and white bread was promulgated with little  
direct experimental evidence to demonstrate the value  
of such a proposal for the nourishment of human beings.

The same kind of curious fact has become manifest during  
last year in the bleaching process which is used for over ninety  
cent of American flour. To improve the keeping qualities of  
ur, and to add to that whiteness which advertising had made  
onymous with quality, the milling industry used nitrogen  
chloride as a bleaching agent. It fulfilled these two ends of the  
de very effectively, and yet it was years before anyone decided  
investigate experimentally the possible effects of such bleaching  
human nutrition. The first experiment, on dogs and cats, were  
idedly alarming. The animals developed fits, and some eventu-  
died, when maintained on a high intake of flour bleached

with nitrogen trichloride, or "agene." Animals closer to man such as monkeys, showed much less pronounced symptoms, but did develop nervousness and poor coordination. Human experiments have, to date, been inconclusive, but with so much presumptive evidence from the effect of agene-bleached flour on lower animals, there is still considerable reason to suspect that the cumulative effect of such flour on man, over a long period of time, might be definitely injurious to the human nervous system. It is too early for the scientific experimenter to commit himself on this point. But if the evidence does trace some human neuroses back to agene, that will only demonstrate further that when flour is made for an end other than human health, only sheer accident can make the product conducive to human health.

There are two possible reactions to this kind of situation. The first, and commonest reaction is this: let the government take away the freedom of the millers and bakers to make bad bread. The second reaction is: every family should make itself free to bake good bread; it should possess the land, the equipment, and the know-how to do for itself what others cannot be trusted to do for it. The clash of these two reactions occurs not only here, but in every field of social thought. One reaction to social injustice will be: let the government take away the freedom of the employer to pay low wages. The opposite reaction will be: let every worker make himself free to refuse low wages.

In the first kind of solution you have only to get a law passed. This kind of solution appeals to people who like to do things in a big way, in a paternalistic way. The possibility of success of such a solution has been suggested in the story of some previous legislative fiascos in the field of nutritional reform.

In the second kind of solution you have to get out and work for you and your family, and the families of your community, to make yourselves free, as free to bake good bread as to refuse low wages. You will have to put bread-making into the hands of those who will work for human ends, for human persons, and that means putting it into your own hands, which may be very busy already. But there is no alternative which is either workable or compatible with human freedom. The baking of bread must be in the hands of those who love, those who love human persons at the same time that they love the right making of things. Only within the family, and to a lesser extent within the small community do you find the love enlightened by knowledge which is our sole guarantee of good bread, good health, and good human life.

The knowledge which enabled man to destroy the integrity of bread and of human health developed far more rapidly did the knowledge of how to maintain their integrity. But latter knowledge has, thanks be to God, been developed in time. It is now available. It remains for those who love, enlighten themselves with this knowledge, if they are to prove genuineness of their love. Neither love alone nor knowledge can save us from what we have made of bread-baking, and every other essential function which we have let fall into the hands of necessarily loveless professionals. For that necessary combination of love and knowledge we must look to the family, the productive home wherein man and woman share in various complementary ways the roles of maker and lover. Only such a one can be the sure provider of our daily bread. Minneapolis readers please copy.

JULIAN PLEASANTS

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### URBANITY

You can have the country.  
For me, the city beats it.  
Sure, I know you grow the food.  
But, after all, who eats it?

## The Man With the Hoe: A Reinterpretation

Since Edwin Markham saw Millet's famous painting "Man With the Hoe" and put in a poem what he saw, no one seems willing to add or change or even doubt a word of his masterpiece as being *the* interpretation of what the picture means. And I wonder if Markham saw everything there was to see in the picture, saw even the most important features, saw even what Millet saw when he painted the picture. Viewed in the light of modern industrial progress, there is much to be said in behalf of the man with the hoe.

The first and most important point to be noted in contrast to modern machine work is that the man does have control of the hoe even to the extent of being able to lean upon it. If modern manufacturing methods were to be portrayed realistically with the same figures, it would be necessary to paint a gigantic machine leaning against an insignificant man, slowly crushing him to death to keep it running. Machinery has not, contrary to modern opinion, done man's work for him; it has only changed that work from a certain creative operation employing the whole man to a mere mechanical motion. Machines have not been integrated into man's life, man has been integrated into the life of machines. Machines have not taken the place of men in war. The millions of men engaged in battle and the hundreds of thousands who are killed, compared to the small regular armies which formerly engaged in combat, give striking proof of this.

This idea of the man with the hoe, the man in control of the hoe, cannot be over-emphasized. What Markham calls "the emptiness of ages in his face," might only be the numbing fatigues consequent upon a long, hard day's work in the field. I do not believe for a moment that the man with the hoe was a genius, but I certainly deny that he was nothing more than a brute. Anyone who has ever hoed a field of live plants knows that it takes far more than "horse sense" to do the job successfully. As far as I know, no one has ever sent out a horse alone to do it. Something more, simply and solely human, is necessary. An elementary knowledge of the relation of means to ends, of knowing how high the hill should be for each particular plant, of knowing when to take the dirt so there will be enough for all—at least some knowledge of all this is imperative. And such work gives added perfection to practical intellectual development that we

a machine does not even pretend to give and even other intellectual training can never supply. Such intellectual development results in a good balance of common sense or, better yet, a practical appreciation of life.

Moreover, there is another figure prominent in any industrial system which is conspicuous here by his absence,—the boss. This lack of any visible taskmaster coupled with the fact that the man leaning on the hoe seem to indicate that he is his own master, some little way at least, no small accomplishment in any economic system. The boss plays a far more prominent part in modern industry, and a far less satisfactory one.

... what to him

Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?  
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,  
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?

What are these things to the modern working man, living he does along city streets with bricks for flowers and pavements fields, nourished exclusively on modern music which is not the "swing of Pleiades," and which so often makes a man bow to reason and offer sacrifice to the gods of sense pleasure? How little Plato or the "swing of Pleiades" mean to the modern man is clearly shown by the fact that both are explained in footnotes, the only footnotes during the whole poem. And yet I think the "rift of dawn" might have meant a great deal to the man with the hoe; it might have meant the coming of a good day for work with the coming of the great life-giving sun. The "reddening of the rose" may have meant even more; it may have meant all that the approach of harvest season means to people whose life depends on the life of the land.

All this is not meant to be against Markham's poem as an interpretation of the painting, still less is it a defense for a system of agrarian servitude such as the peasants in France had to endure. But it is meant to protest against stopping at Markham's poem as the interpretation or, to be more exact, the explanation of the picture. As a matter of fact, Millet had no intention of uttering the "battle cry of the next thousand years," of portraying the rough rude labor of the peasant as "soul-quenching," of crying protest to the judges of the world." He was not painting to use any industrial revolution, though men have tried to make him the prophet of progress ever since. He was simply trying to make us feel the meaning of God's words when He said: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread." It may seem a harsh law, yet because it is God's law it is the basis of our no-

bility and dignity. Millet saw that the peasants of France seem to appreciate that law more than any other class of people and this made them the fit subject for his art.

Millet painted another masterpiece, "The Angelus." It is another scene of the same simple peasant life, of two peasants bowing their heads at eventide to congratulate Our Lady on her glorious dignity. This picture may help to understand better still the nobility and dignity of the man with the hoe. Suppose he too were a Catholic, and this is not too much to suppose in this section of France which has rooted itself in the Faith as it has in the soil. "What gulfs between him and the seraphim!" Perhaps there are no gulfs at all, perhaps the seraphim look at him with amazement as they see in his soul the Blessed Trinity, the God that is their everlasting joy to adore.

And God Himself may look on him with love, seeing in him the image of His only begotten Son. Perhaps we should look again at the man with the hoe and see him a little more as Millet saw him. Perhaps we will appreciate him a little more as God appreciates him.

JOHN GLENNON



### COMPETITORS

Partnerships of many kinds  
You'll see in printer's ink  
But this one you will never find:  
God and Mammon, Inc.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Prescription For World Harmony

HERE'S FREEDOM FOR THE BRAVE  
by Paul McGuire  
Borrow, \$4.00

Mr. McGuire's contribution to any social inquiry is uniquely valuable because he is a Catholic internally and externally

the hierarchy of spirit and the geography of space. The ubiquity of a bee is productive of honey, whereas any number of excursions by a vicious cat provide nothing more than dozing memories before a quiet nap. His kind of cosmopolitanism is not of the Cook's Tour variety. When we say he has been around, we don't mean a merry-go-round, but rather on his appointed rounds. Throughout his extensive travels he has always had a destination.

Just as his *Experiment in World Order*, this is fruit of those travels, and aims at a supra-national solution to our current cosmic crisis. Briefly and succinctly, with a poet's insight and a journalist's loyalty to facts, he examines the various political and economic entities that play the leading roles in today's drama of history. The United States, the Soviet Union and the British Commonwealth occupy most of his attention, but he does not neglect the moral prestige of France nor the low pressure area over Berlin toward which the angry winds of the world are rushing.

The first part of the book deals with the effects of an antagonistic, self-centered, competitive economy that has reduced men to servility throughout the Western World. He sees this institutionalized avarice as the spawning ground for nationalism and the Monstrous State. Self-interest engenders a distrust that sets state against state, and each becomes a narrow citadel set upon its own untidy heap of pottage.

These deep-dug channels have become encircling moats of distrust and cannot be bridged except by an architecture that finds its principles in the moral laws.

The British, he feels, have served destiny well by devising a moral community that binds an empire enthusiastically but freely to a common fate. So too have we in our various states united diverse peoples and tickled them at a common breast.

The Russian is cast as the villain of the piece, but McGuire makes us aware that the role is more subtle and complex than glib journalese may lead us to believe. The left hand of a fanatical supra-national ideology is fast becoming aware and wary of what the right hand of nationalist ambition is doing. The seeds of its own destruction have already grown in the Marxist paradise and the danger is that the leaders of this goded revolution, when encircled by their sins, may choose to shoot it out rather than recant.

When speaking to America (his message is primarily directed to us) Mr. McGuire addresses himself to a generosity which he assumes lies hidden beneath many strata of isolationist ticker-tape. He points to the fact that this generosity was momentarily uncovered with Wilson's good neighbor policy but that it was trampled underfoot by the Wall Street bulls and bears.

This book is a penetrating study of contemporary history with a mosaic of well-matched sketches of significant events. The question left

unanswered in my mind is, from what source will the new river of erosy spring? Where can we look to see signs of a quickened sp I doubt if it can grow from cement streets and hardened hearts. inner compulsion of industrialism, whether it be in Detroit or Minsk, nothing with which to be generous and it has made misers of us all. has bred a nickel-in-the-slot mentality that demand's a nickel's worth a nickel spent.

I believe our hope for this needed generosity lies in an eventual eration of all those Christian cells that are now leavening the lump of Western World. This generosity is a thing of intensive spirit and exte property. It will be some time before this generosity beco supra-national, but it could be hastened if we encouraged a return agrarian balance in such countries as Australia, Canada and the Uni States, opening them to native and foreign migration. In Christian families and communal generosity the seed of freedom will bear fruit and t will grow a vine of justice to encircle the world.

ED WILLOCK

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## Through Eyes That See

ON PILGRIMAGE  
By Dorothy Day  
*Catholic Worker*, \$1.00

Long before we had seen the ugliness a New York tenement we had often wall down Mott Street on a stifling sum morning to early Mass in the little Chu of the Transfiguration in Mulberry Bend. We have seen the vegetable venders, their push-carts piled high with exo looking greens, and the dark-eyed Italian children playing along refuse-littered curbs. We were familiar with all the sights, sounds and smells of the slums as Dorothy Day describes them in her warm and vi *Catholic Worker* column.

*On Pilgrimage* is a selection of these columns that have appeared the paper recently. They are meditations en route to speaking engagements, through industrial areas, while visiting her daughter Tamar at West Virginia homestead. They describe retreat activities at Maryfarm as well as everyday happenings in Mott Street. Through each page shines the truth of Saint Teresa's definition of life as "a night in an uncomfortable inn." For Dorothy Day a large part of the discomfort has been the weeping of her fellow pilgrims oppressed by spiritual or physical anguish.

Those who know the *Catholic Worker* viewpoint will find in this little book a reaffirmation of familiar values, perhaps in a somewhat soft mood. Above all, these seem to be the thoughts of a woman, one who for many years has been drawn irresistibly toward suffering and the penitent life as to the very heart of Christ's teaching.

*On Pilgrimage* will be welcomed by Dorothy Day's spiritual children to whom she has preached better than any other in contemporary America the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, not only in her many wonderful writings but by sharing intimately and lovingly the life and ha ships of the very poor. For those who have thus far remained deaf to her

ssage—but is there any time left now to remonstrate with them while shadow of the beast darkens over us and only the candles of those who Christ in His poor and live by faith alone can remain burning?

ELIZABETH M. SHEEHAN

## Folk Dance Collection

HONOR YOUR PARTNER  
by Ed Durlacher  
Devin-Adair, \$7.50

Recreation on a community basis is a need of the times. The folk dance can be the sunny side of the week for neighbors and friends, and it helps to cement relations for the more important

venues of work, prayer and study.

We realize that there are various schools of thought on secular versus religious folk music. I'm afraid that we can't wait until these are resolved before we start dancing. The eighty-one dances contained herein have been chosen for their popularity around the country. Instructions for both callers and dancers, calls, music and sequence photographs of the more difficult steps, provide an all around work-book for those who want to play.

I would say that an old fiddler with young ideas, a good-sized piece of floor, a caller with lots of vim, and couples ready to blush and flush—add this 283-page mammoth book—should add up to a solution to neighborhood boredom.

ED WILLOCK

## Greatness From a Christian Viewpoint

THE GREAT BOOKS: A Christian Appraisal  
A Symposium of the First Year's Program  
of the Great Books Foundation  
Devin-Adair, \$2.00

A great book has been defined as one which has changed man's thinking. Using this as its cri-

criterion, the Great Books Foundation, begun at the University of Chicago, drew from the wealth of world literature a representative list of a hundred books which have become known as the Great Books. Throughout the country the Foundation has set up study courses and discussion clubs, designed to encourage adult education through a study of the Great Books. As its title implies, the present volume is a series of essays by eighteen foremost Catholic thinkers who attempt to evaluate these books, from Aristotle up to the present day, in the light of Christian teaching.

The book is not pretentious in its claims. Its contributors, among whom are F. J. Sheed, Louis J. A. Mercier, Walter Farrell and Dietrich von Hildebrand, confine their analyses to evaluating each work in so far as it fulfills its purpose of clarifying not only man as man, and in his relationship to other men, but also in his relationship to God. In a century where creature threatens to forget Creator, it becomes necessary to remind man of his spirituality and his final destiny. The essays serve too as a friendly warning to those thinking of going into a study of the Great Books, not to approach them with either too great awe or expectation in

their ability to solve all problems. If a study of a great book is to fruitful, it must be remembered that any book is merely the record of a man's thinking about man and his basic problems, the problems of goodness, truth, beauty, justice, government—and that as Christians its greatness for us lies in its applicability to our individual lives, and its either help or hindering us in reaching our final end. As Father Gardiner in *Introduction* brings out, if a book is considered great merely in its having changed man's thinking, then in this view, Hitler is a great man, having changed man's thinking quite drastically. All of which means that, however regrettable, all the great books are not good books, as witness Marx and Freud and the effect their writings have had on man's thought. Finally these essays caution us to approach the Great Books with humility, the very necessary requisite if knowledge is to become wisdom.

The respective authors acquit themselves admirably in their treatment. From Plato to Saint Thomas, from Shakespeare to Marx, they tell us in simple terms what makes a book great. And in an age where so much man's thinking has become tainted with naturalism and materialism, it is good to find a book which does its thinking in the light of eternity.

J. M. P.

## READING ON DISTRIBUTISM

<i>Flee to the Fields</i> , a symposium of English Catholic Land Movement, by Belloc, McNabb, Jebb, Robbins, etc.	\$2.50
<i>The Sun of Justice</i> , an essay on social teaching of Catholic Church, by Harold Robbins	2.25
<i>A Declaration of the Independents</i> , by Graham Carey	.50
<i>Mosaic of Man</i> , by Rev. F. Walsh	.25
<i>Man Unchained; Security and Freedom</i> , by C. G. Hope	.30
<i>The Cross of Gold</i> , by H. D. C. Pepler	.35
<i>Distributism</i> , by S. Sagar	.25
<i>Machinery</i> , by D. Marshall	.10
<i>The Cross and the Plough</i> , quarterly edited by H. Robbins, each	.10
<i>The Restoration of Property</i> (1948 ed.) by Hilaire Belloc	.75
<i>The Crisis of Civilization</i> , by Hilaire Belloc	2.50
<i>The Alternative</i> , by Hilaire Belloc	.20
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